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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION

AT RICHMOND, DECEMBER 1, 2000

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION

CASE NO. PUC990159

Ex Parte: In re:  
Investigation of area  
code relief for the 804  
Numbering Plan Area

ORDER ON AREA CODE RELIEF

On June 24, 1999, the North American Numbering Plan Administrator ("NANPA"), on behalf of the Virginia telecommunications industry ("industry"), reported a proposed relief plan for the 804 Numbering Plan Area ("NPA"). The plan, which NANPA represented to be a consensus recommendation by the industry, was to implement an all-services distributed overlay relief plan for the 804 NPA. The Commission assumed jurisdiction to review the plan and suspended implementation of the proposed overlay for the 804 NPA, pursuant to its Order Assuming Jurisdiction issued September 23, 1999. An Order was issued on December 29, 1999, which assigned a Hearing Examiner to conduct all further proceedings; directed that hearings be convened to receive public comments within the area served by the 804 area code; and directed that notice be published in newspapers, giving the time and place of the hearings and the docket number to which comments could be sent.

Local hearings were conducted by the Hearing Examiner on March 6, 2000, in the Charlotte County Circuit Court, and on March 9, 2000, in the Commission's Second Floor Courtroom. Public witnesses appeared and testified in both local hearings. On March 27, 2000, an evidentiary hearing was convened and public witnesses again appeared and testified as well as witnesses for NANPA, the Staff, and Verizon Virginia Inc. (f/k/a Bell Atlantic-Virginia, Inc.).<sup>1</sup>

On July 19, 2000, the Report of Michael D. Thomas, Hearing Examiner, (hereinafter, Hearing Examiner's Report) was filed, together with a copy of the transcript of the several hearings.

The Hearing Examiner recommended Alternative 3b, a geographic split with an overlay, with the overlay being implemented at the exhaust of the area encompassing Richmond. The geographic split will be along the outside boundaries of the rate centers surrounding Richmond and which have seven-digit dialing to Richmond.

In addition to recommending Alternative 3b for area code relief for the 804 NPA, the Hearing Examiner recommended that wireless carriers in Area A, under this alternative, be permitted the option of allowing their customers to retain their existing telephone numbers until such time as their customers

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<sup>1</sup> Written comments were also received from individuals, businesses and those representing business interests, governmental entities, and the telecommunications industry.

upgrade their wireless telephones. This would allow the wireless customers in Area A to avoid the expense and inconvenience of bringing in their telephones simply for reprogramming.

Comments on the Hearing Examiner's Report were filed by Verizon Wireless, Verizon Virginia Inc., Verizon South Inc. ("Verizon Virginia" and "Verizon South"), and Cox Virginia Telcom, Inc. ("Cox").

The Commission concludes from its review of the Hearing Examiner's Report and the record in this Case, including the comments, that ten-digit dialing in the 804 NPA should be postponed wherever reasonable. Therefore, the Commission adopts the findings in the Hearing Examiner's Report and approves Alternative 3b for area code relief for the 804 area code. The Commission now takes judicial notice that the latest projected exhaust date for the 804 NPA remains April of 2002, as of the date of this Order. The comments of Verizon Virginia and Verizon South indicate that the industry prefers to complete area code relief a quarter prior to the projected exhaust date to avoid the possibility of actual exhaust and potential denial of service requests. Therefore, we will order the authorized area code relief plan, Alternative 3b, to become effective on April 1, 2001, with the implementation of the area code split.

This should allow the industry adequate time to complete customer notice and education.

Finally, we consider the Hearing Examiner's third recommendation to permit wireless carriers in Area A the option of allowing their customers to retain their existing telephone numbers until such time as those customers upgrade their wireless telephones. The Commission is concerned that allowing an open-ended period for wireless customers to retain their telephone numbers in Area A could potentially tie up codes needed for assignment in Area A. Therefore, the Commission adopts the Hearing Examiner's third recommendation with the modification that the wireless customers in Area A may retain their telephone numbers no longer than two years, following implementation of the area code split. This period should accommodate the public convenience while allowing these customers adequate time to return their telephones.

In the event that the projected exhaust date for the 804 area code is moved further into the future, we are ordering this case to remain open to further consider modification of the effective date of the area code relief ordered herein.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

(1) The area code relief described in Alternative 3b, Geographic Split/Overlay, as recommended by the Hearing

Examiner, is hereby approved to become effective April 1, 2001, consistent with the findings above.

(2) The wireless carriers in Area A of the approved area code relief plan shall be granted the option of allowing their customers to retain their existing telephone numbers until such time as the customers upgrade their wireless telephones but in no event later than two (2) years following implementation of the area code split ordered herein.

(3) This case shall remain open.